

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 31, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington DC, 20500

Dear President Obama,

We are writing to request that your administration approve badly needed defensive military assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The Ukrainian military is struggling to defend its sovereignty against insurgents armed and trained by Russia and needs to possess the military capabilities to defeat the separatists, deter Russian aggression, and restore stability to the nation. The tragic disaster of the attack on Malaysian Airlines flight MH-17, with strong evidence that it was downed by Russian-led separatist militants in Ukraine, further illustrates the danger posed to the region and the international community by the continued conflict in Eastern Ukraine. Until stability is restored, the democratically elected government of Ukraine will be unable to continue on the path of reform and modernization that the United States has encouraged it to follow.

The United States has been instrumental in delivering vital economic and political assistance. Through the Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act of 2014 and administrative actions, the United States has provided Ukraine with a \$1 billion loan guarantee and over \$50 million in additional political and economic assistance. The United States also helped Ukraine secure a \$17 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund and an 11 billion Euro aid package from the European Union. We appreciate your work in helping to provide this assistance.

However, the crucial political and economic reform goals this previously approved aid is designed to help meet will not be possible if the government of Ukraine is unable to defeat the separatists, deter foreign aggression, and maintain law and order over all areas of the country. The bipartisan Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act of 2014 authorized \$100 million to enhance security cooperation and assistance efforts with Ukraine and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. We are concerned, however, that the level of military support the United States has provided to date is insufficient to providing the Ukrainian military with the capabilities it needs to secure its borders and deter future aggression.

The Ukrainian military needs more sophisticated equipment to succeed in its mission and preserve the great strides Ukraine has made since the Maidan uprising. We believe that a variety of non-lethal systems such as advanced communications equipment, night-vision goggles, navigation equipment, and body armor as well as defensive military weapons would provide Ukrainian forces with the capabilities they need to restore order and discourage further foreign interference.

We understand that both the Departments of State and Defense continue to coordinate with, assess needed capabilities of, and field requests from the Ukrainian security forces. We would like to better understand what steps have been taken to provide assistance to the Ukrainian military and immediate plans to expand that support. Specifically, what military capabilities has the government of Ukraine requested? Of these capabilities, what has your administration authorized to be provided to Ukraine, and what specific capabilities have been delivered to date? Additionally, what is your overall strategy to carry out the requirements set forth in Sec. 7(c) of the Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act of 2014?

The people of Ukraine have chosen a more democratic, transparent, and inclusive future for their country and the United States has pledged to support them in their hour of need. Honoring this commitment means providing the assistance necessary to help Ukraine develop the full range of economic, political, and military tools it needs to fulfill this hopeful vision. We urge you to support more robust assistance to Ukraine.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman
U.S. Senator



Ben Cardin
U.S. Senator